

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the detailed examination evidenced by the Office Action mailed March 12, 2004 (hereinafter "Office Action"). Applicant has amended the specification, abstract, drawings and claims to overcome the objections raised in the Office Action, as explained in detail below.

Applicant appreciates the indication that Claims 5, 6, 10 and 16 recite patentable subject matter. Rather than amending these claims to independent form, however, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1 and 20 to include recitations relating to capacitive coupling of the feedback circuit to the buffer circuit, recitations that are neither disclosed nor suggested by U.S. Patent No. 5,872,484 to Hynecek. In concert with the amendments to Claims 1 and 20, Applicant has canceled Claims 2, 3 and 21 and amended Claims 4, 7, 11 and 12 to change their dependencies. Applicant further submits that independent Claim 14 is patentable over Hynecek for at least similar reasons. Reasons for patentability of the claims are discussed below.

The objections to the abstract, specification, and drawings have been overcome

Applicant has amended the abstract as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant has amended the specification to replace reference to a bias terminal 10 in FIG. 3 with "N3", to replace reference to a bias terminal 10' in FIG. 4 with "N4", and have corrected the references to the buffer circuit 7 and the second NMOS transistor M12 in FIG. 3. These amendments overcome the objections to the specification on page 2 of the Office Action, as well as some of the drawing objections on page 3 of the Office Action. Applicant has submitted proposed drawing corrections to overcome the remaining objections to the drawings.

The claim objections have been overcome

Applicants have amended Claims 7 and 15 to correct the antecedent basis errors noted by the Examiner.

Independent Claims 1, 14 and 20 are patentable over Hynecek

Independent Claims 1, 14 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Hynecek. Applicant has amended Claim 1 to include recitations from Claims 2 and 3, and now recites:

An output-compensated buffer, comprising:
a buffer circuit that receives an input signal and produces an output signal responsive thereto at an output terminal, said buffer circuit including an input source-follower circuit that receives the input signal; and
a feedback circuit having an input connected to said output terminal and ***an output capacitively connected to a bias terminal of said input source follower circuit*** and operative to vary an input capacitance of said source follower circuit responsive to the output signal at said output terminal.

In rejecting Claim 3, the Office Action states that FIG. 2 of Hynecek discloses capacitive coupling to a bias terminal of a source follower circuit. *Office Action*, p. 5. Applicant respectfully disagrees. In particular, FIG. 2 of Hynecek shows a source follower circuit having a transistor 52 with its drain directly (i.e., ohmically) coupled to the drain of the transistor 50. There is no capacitive coupling of these nodes indicated or suggested. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Hynecek does not disclose or suggest all of the recitations of Claim 1 and, for at least this reason, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over Hynecek.

Claim 20 has been amend along lines similar to Claim 1, and now recites:

An image capture device, comprising:
a charged coupled device (CCD) that generates a video signal;
a buffer circuit responsive to the CCD and operative to receive the video signal and produce an output signal responsive thereto at an output terminal, said buffer circuit including an input source-follower circuit that receives the video signal; and
a feedback circuit having an input connected to said output terminal and ***an output capacitively coupled to a bias terminal of said input source follower circuit*** and operative to vary an input capacitance of said source follower circuit responsive to the output signal at said output terminal.

Applicant submits that Claim 20, as amended, is patentable over Hynecek for at least the reasons discussed above with reference to Claim 1.

Claim 14 recites:

An output-compensated buffer, comprising:

a buffer circuit that receives an input signal and produces an output signal responsive thereto at an output terminal, said buffer circuit including an input source-follower circuit that has an input terminal that receives the input signal and a bias terminal that receives a bias voltage from a power source; and

a feedback circuit connected to said output terminal and to said input source follower circuit and *operative to variably couple the power source and the bias terminal via a capacitor.*

In rejecting Claim 14, the Office Action appears to concede that Hynecek does not disclose the above-highlighted recitations, stating "since the input capacitance of the input source follower circuit can be varied by means of the feedback loop alone, it is just a design preference to additionally include a capacitor for performing the same." *Office Action*, p. 9. This is an improper basis for rejection under § 102 because the Office Action is implicitly conceding that Hynecek does not disclose all of the recitations of Claim 14. Under 35 U.S.C. § 102, "a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." M.P.E.P. § 2131 (quoting *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co.*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)). Moreover, the Office Action does not provide any evidence from Hynecek or other prior art of a suggestion or motivation supporting the alleged "design preference." Accordingly, Hynecek also does not suggest the recitations of Claim 14, and for or at least these reasons, Applicant submits that Claim 14 is patentable over Hynecek.

The dependent claims are patentable

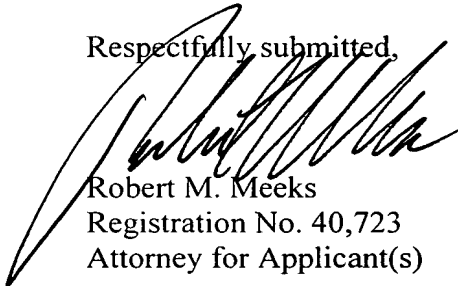
Applicant submits that dependent Claims 4-13, 15-19 and 22 are patentable at least by virtue of depending from various ones of patentable independent Claims 1, 14, and 20. Applicant further submits that, in addition to Claims 5, 6, 10 and 16 that were indicated as being allowable in the Office Action, several other of the dependent claims are separately patentable.

For example, Claim 4 recites "wherein said feedback circuit is operative to variably capacitively couple the bias terminal to the power source responsive to the output signal at the output terminal." As discussed above, Hyncek does not disclose or suggest a capacitive coupling, much less a variable capacitive coupling. For at least this reason, Applicant submits that Claim 4 is separately patentable over Hyncek.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that the claims are now in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed above. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the claims and passing of the application to issue in due course. Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact the undersigned by telephone to address any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,



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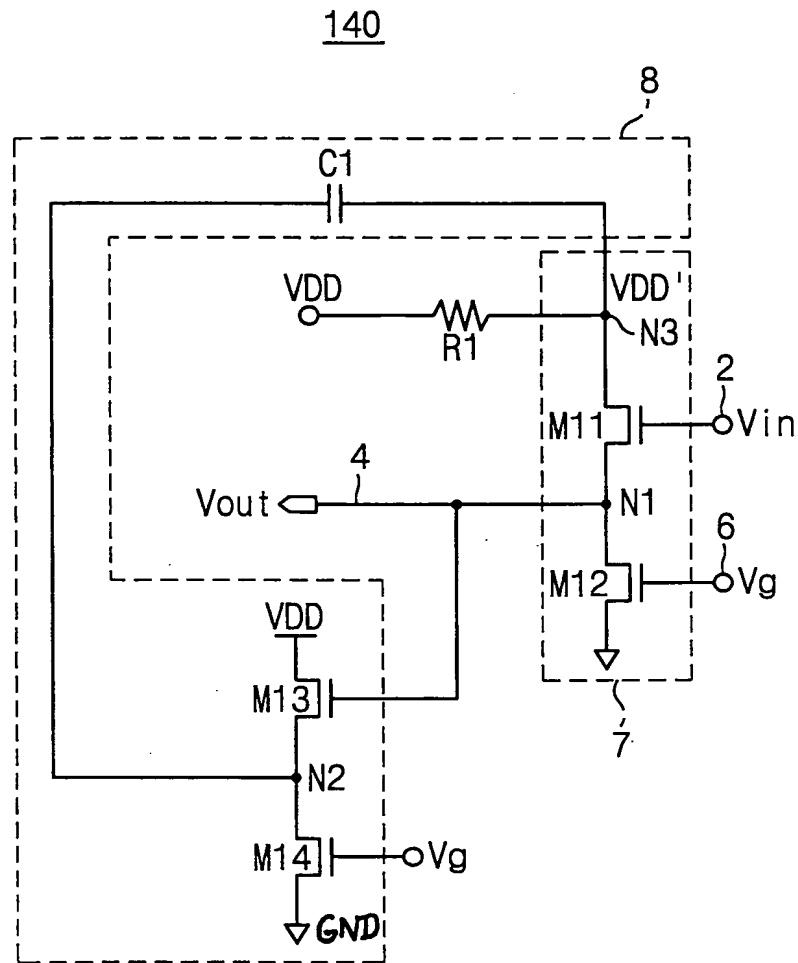
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Candi L. Riggs



Fig. 3



APPROVED

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8/10/04